

The Edman Award 1996

With the continued support of the Millipore Corporation, the Edman Award was given this year to Dr. Winona Barker and Prof. Jerker Porath for their contributions to protein identification and characterization.

Prerequisites for interpretation of protein structures are comparisons against existing structures in data banks. Several such banks are now accessible worldwide, but their development started with the Atlas of Protein Sequence and Structure, initiated by Dr. Margaret Dayhoff at the National Biomedical Research Foundation. Doctor Winona Barker joined the Committee of Mathematical Biology at this Foundation after her dissertation in Physiology at the University of Chicago in 1966, became director of its Protein Identification Resource (PIR) data base in 1983, and became Vice President of the Foundation in 1996. She has continuously worked on organizational issues in central areas of data bank development, from which, as protein chemists, we have all benefitted, and to which we now have direct access through many modes.

Similarly, prerequisites for direct protein analysis are efficient methods for protein purification, a field to which Jerker Porath made outstanding contributions as Professor of Biochemistry at Uppsala University, Sweden, 1968–1988. His name is closely associated with chromatography media for size exclusion, ion exchange, hydrophobic interaction, and affinity chromatographies, which, in the tradition of the “Uppsala School of Separation Science” from the days of Svedberg and Thiselius, he developed and used to study peptide hormones, plasma proteins, snake venoms, and insect proteins, among others. He is now at the University of Arizona in Tucson, where he continues his studies. Professor Porath has received several prizes and honorary doctorates in medicine and technology, and he is a member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Engineering.

In short, Dr. Barker and Prof. Porath jointly symbolize different aspects of the prerequisites for protein analyses and interpretations. It is a pleasure to acknowledge their contributions with the Edman Award 1996. We also gratefully acknowledge the Millipore Corporation for supporting this recognition.

The 1996 Edman Award Committee was composed of Drs. Ettore Appella (NIH, Bethesda), Zouhair Atassi (Baylor College, Houston), Agnes Henschen (UCI, Irvine), Pierre Jollès (Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle, Paris), Hans Jörnvall (Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm), Philip Onigman (Millipore, Bedford), Michel van der Rest (Institut de Biologie Structurale, Grenoble), Fumio Sakiyama (Osaka University), Johann Salnikow (Technische Universität, Berlin), Akira Tsugita (University of Tokyo), and Joël Vandekerckhove (University of Gent).

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